

ART in Embassies Program



United States Embassy Mbabane

Cover:
Richard Stout
Morning in Tivoli
2002
Acrylic on canvas
40 x 30 in. (101.6 x 76.2 cm)

Introduction

Art helps transcend cultural, national, and political boundaries, and therefore plays an important role in linking people and cultures through shared appreciation. In welcoming you to the Residence of the Ambassador of the United States of America to the Kingdom of Swaziland, Joy and I hope that you enjoy this exhibition of works that reflects the beauty and diversity of our home state of Texas.

Texas is a unique part of the American landscape, notable for its vastness, beauty, and varied terrain. The group of talented Texas artists whose works comprise this exhibition – both native Texans and Texans-by-choice – have truly been inspired by the landscapes, flora, and vistas of our state, and the product of their inspiration has, in turn, demonstrated their own depth and breadth as artists.

Swaziland is far from Texas, yet we share in our own way rich, varied, and beautiful terrain. But also of note in our home state, as it is equally in Swaziland, is the importance of tradition and culture – part of the fabric of peoples that makes us unique, proud, and thankful for the comfort and beauty of home.

The works in this exhibition are diverse in both media and subject matter, demonstrating that the source of our inspiration – which emphasizes, in a sense, our uniqueness – also helps us to bridge cultural and political boundaries by simultaneously promoting understanding between people, connections between places, and a realization that at the end of the day, we are far more alike than we are different.

The paintings and other works in this exhibition help visitors experience several different realities of the Lone Star State – from the familiar and beloved central Texas bluebonnets of Rob Rohm or the limestone and glass works



Ambassador and Mrs. Lewis W. Lucke

of Damian Priour to the vast west Texas vistas of Chas Berninghaus. All the artists remind us of home and the vastly diverse nature of our plains, mountains, and deserts.

The ART in Embassies Program was created in 1964 to promote American art in U.S. ambassadorial residences worldwide, achieving its success through extensive loans from museums, collectors, galleries, and artists. I want to express my appreciation to the artists and galleries in Texas that have made this exhibition possible. It is also important to acknowledge the dedication and expertise of the Department of State's ART in Embassies professionals who have succeeded in showcasing the talent and genius of this impressive group of Texan-American artists.

Ambassador Lewis W. Lucke
November 2004

The ART in Embassies Program

The ART in Embassies Program is a unique blend of art, diplomacy, politics, and culture. Regardless of the medium, style, or subject matter, art transcends barriers of language and provides the means for ART to achieve its mission: to promote dialogue through the international language of art that leads to mutual respect and understanding between diverse cultures.

Modestly conceived in 1964, this visual diplomacy initiative has evolved into a sophisticated program that curates exhibitions, managing and exhibiting more than 3,500 original works of loaned art by United States citizens. The work is displayed in the public rooms of some 180 U.S. embassy residences and diplomatic missions worldwide. These exhibitions, with their diverse themes and content, silently yet persuasively represent one of the most important principles of our democracy: freedom of expression. The art is a great source of pride to U.S. ambassadors, assisting them in multi-functional outreach to the host country's educational, cultural, business, and diplomatic communities.

Works of art exhibited through the program encompass a variety of media and styles, ranging from eighteenth century colonial portraiture to contemporary glass sculpture. They are obtained through the generosity of lending sources that include U.S. museums, galleries, artists, institutions, corporations, and private collectors. In viewing the exhibitions, the thousands of guests who visit U.S. embassy residences each year have the opportunity to learn about our nation – its history, customs, values, and aspirations – by experiencing firsthand the international lines of communication known to us all as art.

The ART in Embassies Program is proud to lead this global effort to present the artistic accomplishments of the people of the United States. We invite you to visit the ART web site, <http://aiep.state.gov>, which features on-line versions of all exhibitions worldwide, and hyperlinks with artists and lenders.

"What is it about the Western landscape that captivates our imaginations? And what is it about this area of the country that resonates so deeply with the American spirit? Ralph Waldo Emerson's ideas about the relationship of nature to the self challenged nineteenth century America[ns] to stop looking to Europe for their culture and history and to write their own stories. Artists who accompanied early survey expeditions were confronted with panoramas so vast their European training was inadequate to capture effectively the sweep of the Great Plains. The West provided the unique environment needed to create a new history and, in the process of exploring these vast territories, the spirit of American individualism was forged. The Western experience is still perceived as a quintessentially American phenomenon and the kinetic force of the landscape continues to inspire distinctly expressive voices in American painting.

My husband and I have a place in West Texas that is situated 140 miles southeast of El Paso on high plains surrounded by mountain ranges and cattle ranches. The landscape is starkly beautiful and provides endless subject matter for my work. The images in these paintings capture fleeting moments when the play of light and shadow intensify or obscure the delineation between land and sky. It has been said, 'nature doesn't imitate art but the artist continually imitates nature.' In essence, the nature of the Western landscape has the capacity to profoundly transform ordinary experience."

Katherine Alexander was born in San Diego, California, in 1948. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1971 from San Diego State University, and a Master of Arts degree from California State University, Fullerton, in 1976. She has had solo exhibitions of her work in Houston and El Paso, Texas; Los Angeles, and New York City, and has participated in various group exhibitions throughout the United States and in West Germany, Belgium, and the Netherlands. Alexander lives and works as a studio artist in New York City.

Katherine Alexander

(born 1948)



Summer Thunderstorm, Wild Horse Draw, West Texas

2001

Acrylic on wood panel

20 3/4 x 30 in. (52.7 x 76.2 cm)

Courtesy of the artist and Adair Margo Gallery, El Paso, Texas

"A special feeling for nature was stirred when I discovered the coastal light of Corpus Christi, Texas. The light creates colors that excite my emotions. This landscape places me in a realm of tranquil beauty. My mind is poetically and spiritually opened as I feel basic human emotions which lift my reflections on the beauties of nature. My element does become very important. A sense of place gives me a stage to understand my relationship with nature. My art becomes the vehicle for this interaction. Living in the country, I find that day to day life forces become instinctively understood. I feel that this provokes a dialog with nature that allows its spirit to pass through to the art.

I feel that I must come to nature and not let my art get in the way of it. Nature is a living force that projects so many feelings in me. In not breaking nature's basic laws, improvisation – out of felt experiences and not gimmicks – can enhance my vision.

In Corpus Christi there is not a wide variety of change in seasons, but the differences do express their own actions and moods. From this I wish my paintings to reveal and offer a place for contemplation in a nurturing way. As an artist once said of my paintings: 'they wish you well!'"

Bruno Andrade earned a Bachelor of Science degree in art from Texas A&M University, Kingsville, in 1970, and a Master of Fine Arts degree in painting from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. His honors include two Artist Fellowship Grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, Washington, D.C. (1980 and 1989), and induction into the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American Art Archive (1996). From 1981 to the present, Andrade has been a professor of art, painting, and color at Texas A&M University, Corpus Christie.

Bruno Andrade

(born 1947)



To Your Joy

2000

Oil on canvas

50 x 50 in. (127 x 127 cm)

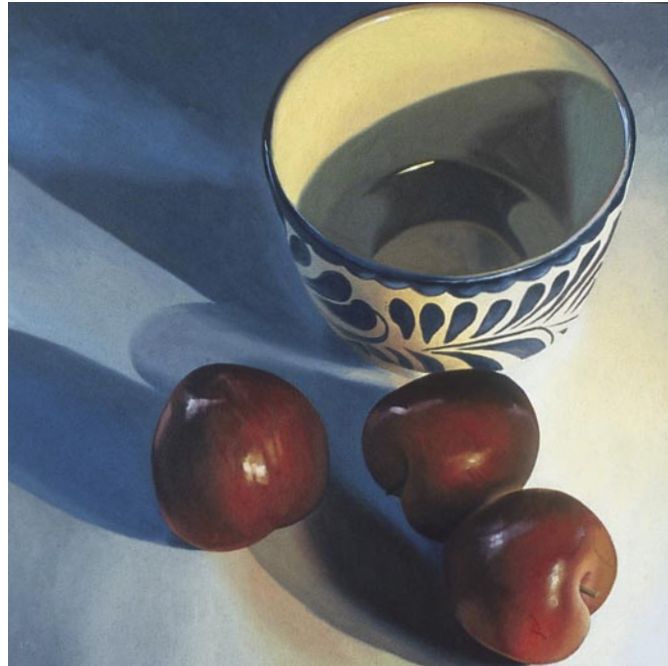
Lent by the artist, courtesy of Carrington Gallery, Ltd., San Antonio, Texas

"In these still lives, I am interested in the notions of beauty, the extraordinariness of the ordinary, the transitory nature of and inevitability of loss inherent in every living thing. Because of my education in the study of literature and because of my life-long addiction to the reading of fiction, metaphor and narrative play a large role in my paintings. Painting pictures of objects from the most ordinary of worlds – the table, the kitchen, the grocery store – allows me to look at these objects long and differently. It is a matter of paying attention. It is a form of meditation."

Ellen Berman earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Texas at Austin; a Master of Arts degree from the University of Houston, Texas; and continued her studies at the Glassell School of Art, Houston. In 1988 she was the recipient of a Mid-America Arts Alliance / National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship Award in Painting, Printmaking, Drawing, and Artists' Books. Her work has been included in numerous one person and group exhibitions throughout Texas and beyond.

Ellen Berman

(born 1946)



Mexican Bowl and Red Plums

2002

Oil on canvas

30 x 30 in. (76.2 x 76.2 cm)

Lent by the artist, courtesy of d berman gallery, Austin, Texas, and McMurtrey Gallery, Houston, Texas

Charles (Chas) Berninghaus was the son of Oscar Berninghaus, one of the six founders of the Taos Society of Artists in New Mexico. The young Berninghaus grew up in St. Louis, but often traveled to Taos, accompanying his father on sketching trips. He later studied art formally at the Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois, and the Art Students League in New York City, summering annually in Taos until moving there permanently in 1927. While his father supported his decision to be an artist, he encouraged his son to seek his own distinctive path and style. The younger Berninghaus painted out-of-doors almost exclusively, seeking to capture the momentary qualities of light.

Julius Charles Berninghaus

(1905-1988)



End of the Santa Fe Trail

1963

Oil on canvas

20 x 24 in. (50.8 x 61 cm)

Courtesy of the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum, Canyon, Texas

"My work deals with themes relating to nature and the environment, themes which I feel are of vital importance in the border region [between the United States and Mexico] where I live and work. This series of paintings began with daily walks in an arroyo near my home. The act of walking becomes part of my work, and the images symbols for the journey."

Susan Davidoff earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the University of Texas at El Paso in 1985, a Master of Arts degree from New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, in 1987, and a Master of Fine Arts degree from New Mexico State in 1989. Her awards include a Mid-America Arts Alliance / National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship Award in 1994, and a Pollack-Siquieros Binational Art Award from the Ford Foundation in 1996. Her work is in numerous collections, including those of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City; the University of Kansas, Lawrence; the University of New Mexico Art Gallery, Albuquerque; the Amarillo Art Center, Texas; and the El Paso Museum of Art, Texas. Since 1988 Davidoff has been an adjunct faculty member at the University of Texas at El Paso.

Susan Davidoff

(born 1953)



Arroyo-Summer No. 4

1999

Oil, wax, natural materials, and pigment on panel

15 x 12 in. (38.1 x 30.5 cm)

Lent by the artist, courtesy of Carrington Gallery, Ltd., San Antonio, Texas

Susan Davidoff
(born 1953)



Arroyo-Summer No. 11

1999

Oil, wax, natural materials, and pigment on panel

15 x 12 in. (38.1 x 30.5 cm)

Lent by the artist, courtesy of Carrington Gallery, Ltd., San Antonio, Texas

"I have painted the Texas landscape for twenty-five years. Although other settings have caught my attention, I have always returned to Texas to paint my best work. In particular, I respond to the land on the edge of the Edwards Plateau, with its limestone cliffs, flowering cactus, and clear water. I know these subjects by heart and my familiarity pushes me beyond mere documentation toward an appreciation of their abstract essence. My work is not realistic; rather, it is a reminder of the land.

I have also created public art around the United States, with projects as diverse as tile murals for Boston's Logan Airport, fountains for Houston's Market Square, obelisks for San Antonio's Riverwalk, and murals for the Washington and Connecticut state arts commissions. A year ago I spent a month as a visiting scholar at the American Academy in Rome. I was selected to be the featured artist for the 2003 Texas Book Festival. As Michael Barnes wrote in the *Austin American-Statesman*: 'Flato overlaps pale smudges of color—like layered crepe paper—mirroring the play of light, the diaphanous quality of water, and the thickness of greenery in western landscapes.'

Malou Flato was born in Corpus Christi, Texas. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1975 from Middlebury College, Vermont. She has shown her work extensively throughout Texas and the Southwest, and has had solo exhibitions at the Waco Museum of Art, Texas (2000); the Tyler Museum of Art, Texas (1999); Arthur Roger Gallery, New Orleans, Louisiana (1999); and the Art Museum of South Texas, Chorus Christi (1980).

Malou Flato

(born 1953)



Laos Cactus

2002

Acrylic

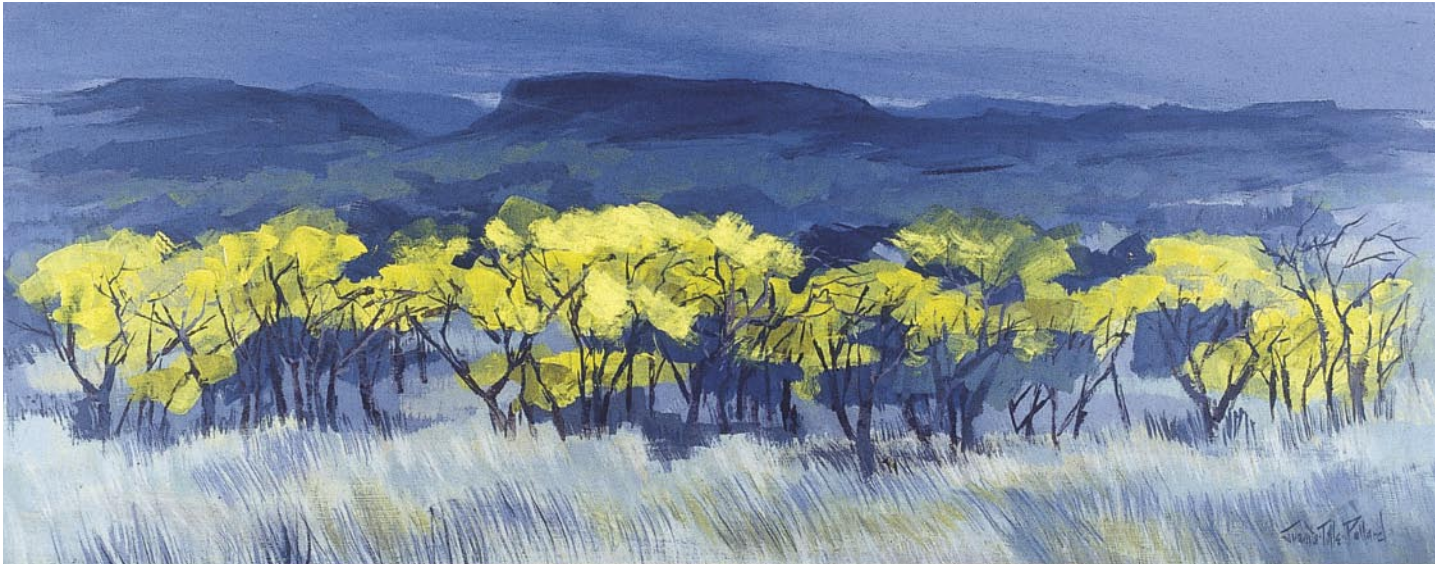
48 x 30 in. (121.9 x 76.2 cm)

Lent by the artist, Austin, Texas; courtesy of McMurtrey Gallery, Houston, Texas

Juanita Pollard studied at Abilene Christian College (now University), Texas; Texas Woman's University, Denton; the Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois; and the University of Southern California, Los Angeles. She taught art at Lubbock Christian College (now University), Texas. She was a member of the Texas Watercolor Society, and exhibited at the West Texas Art Exhibitions in the late 1930s.

Juanita Tittle Pollard

(1909-1994)



Abilene Country

undated

Acrylic on Masonite

16 x 40 in. (40.6 x 101.6 cm)

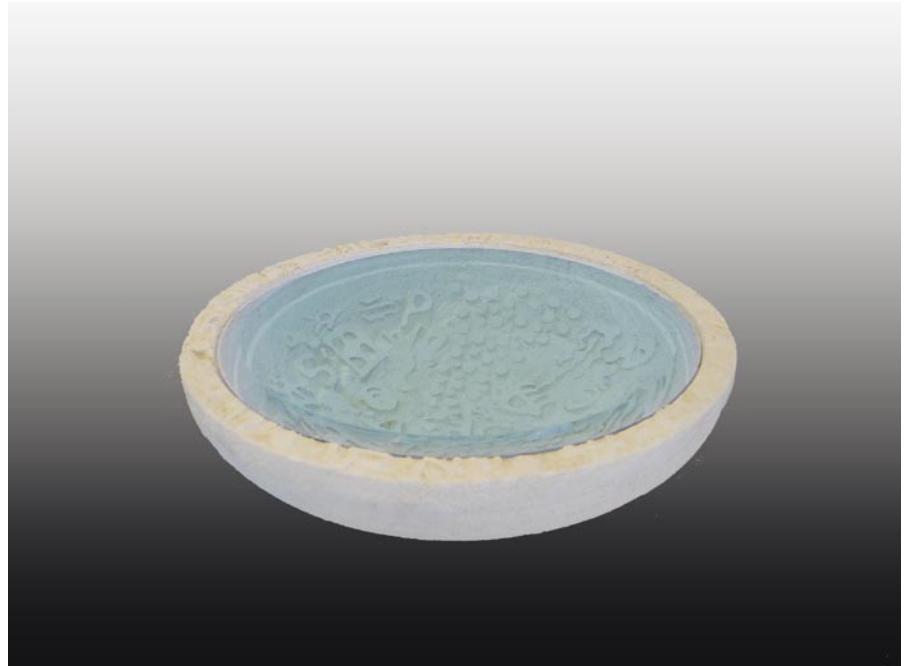
Courtesy of the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum, Canyon, Texas

Damian Priour, a seventh generation Texan, lives and works on his ranch west of Austin, Texas. His favorite materials are glass and limestone, and he has been pairing the two since the 1970s. In his sculpture, glass has become a metaphor for water. It alternately pools in rivulets or flows like powerful currents through slabs of fossil-laced native Texas limestone.

Priour received a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Texas at Austin in 1972; completed design studies at the University of California, Berkeley, in 1977; and participated in the International Sculpture Conference at Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland, in 1988. He has taught classes in creativity at the Pilchuck Glass School in Stanwood, Washington, and Centro del Arte in Monterrey, Mexico.

www.DamianPriour.com

Damian Priour



Bowl with Symbols
2004

Texas limestone and glass
4 x 12 x 12 in. (10.2 x 30.5 x 30.5 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, Austin, Texas

"Working in oil, acrylic and pastel media, I try to capture the dynamics of the interplay of color and light by emphasizing the shapes which they create. I try to reduce each scene to only the essential elements. I strive not to concern myself with illustrative detail. Detail, as such, is suggested. I play up the elements of color and value, creating contrasting relationships of hard and soft edges, opaque and translucent paint, warm and cool colors, dark and light values. To establish the representational aspects of a scene I use tonal and impressionistic color and then add strokes of open color accents for personal expression and interest.

My goal is to communicate the emotions of the abstract through representational painting. The challenge is to take the viewers beyond the subject depicted and bring them into an emotional response to the abstract elements of shape, form, texture, value and color. In addition to the subject, I also strive to make the surface of my paintings interesting through the use of varying thicknesses of paint and brushwork. The messages in my paintings are the works themselves, the interplay of the elements, not the storytelling of the representational content."

Bob Rohm was born and raised in the northeastern United States. After graduating in 1970 from the York Academy of Arts, Pennsylvania, he entered into a career in the film and video production business. He began as a camera assistant, and quickly became a director and producer. Rohm's work schedule eventually led him to stop painting altogether for almost ten years.

Rohm's return to painting was triggered in the early 1980s, when he moved to Texas. There he was inspired by the landscape of stark simplicity and solitary beauty. He began to cut back his production business in order to paint part time, and in a few short years became a full time artist.

Bob Rohm

(born 1948)



Hill Country Color

2002

Oil on canvas

16 x 20 in. (40.6 x 50.8 cm)

Lent by the artist, Flower Mound, Texas; courtesy of Riverbend Gallery, Marble Falls, Texas

Throughout his dual career in fine art and in the graphic arts, Curt Slangal has nurtured a love of digital technology. He continues to be propelled by this passion. With a degree in commercial art, Slangal established himself in the communications field. He has since redefined his direction further, and has established himself as a well-respected artist. Proud to be a product of San Antonio's colorful southside, Slangal resides in this historic Texas city.

Curt Slangal

(born 1954)



Cactus #1

2003

Giclée print

43 x 46 in. (109.2 x 116.8 cm)

Lent by the artist, courtesy of Carrington Gallery, Ltd., San Antonio, Texas

Richard Stout received a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in 1957 from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois, and a Master of Fine Arts degree in 1969 from the University of Texas in Austin. For over twenty years, he served on the faculty of the University of Houston, Texas, as a professor of painting. His lengthy exhibition history spans nearly five decades, and his work can be seen in various public collections, including the Dallas Museum of Art; Kupferstichkabinett, Dresden, Germany; the Menil Collection, Houston; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; the University of Houston; and the Art Museum of Southeast Texas, Beaumont. In 2004 Stout was named "Texas Artist of the Year."

Stout's paintings fuse surrounding landscapes with vast expanses of water to create a sense of awe and mystery. He is an artist of our time, but through his works he transports us to places near and far, making us appreciate the world in fresh ways and bringing a set of emotions into our experience of daily life that, albeit clouded in mystery, is both reassuring and uplifting. While the principal subject of all his work remains atmosphere and light, the symbolic content of his work can never be ignored.

Richard Stout

(born 1934)



Morning in Tivoli

2002

Acrylic on canvas

40 x 30 in. (101.6 x 76.2 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Houston, Texas, and Holly Johnson Gallery, Dallas, Texas

Richard Stout

(born 1934)



Lido

2002

Acrylic on canvas

40 x 30 in. (101.6 x 76.2 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Houston, Texas, and Holly Johnson Gallery, Dallas, Texas

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